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Food and Home Notes

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Remember--cracked or soiled eggs can contain bacteria that can produce food poisoning. For your protection, use cracked or soiled eggs only when they are thoroughly cooked, warns U.S. Department of Agriculture egg specialists.

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Poultry tastes best when broiled over hot coals, not in flame or smoke.

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Thickening custards or puddings? Two egg yolks or two egg whites have the same thickening power as one whole egg.

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Cook eggs at low temperatures, avoid overcooking and cool promptly. Don't forget about the easiest way to prepare eggs--the oven method. Put egg in custard cup in shallow baking dish with a tablespoon milk and dot of butter or margarine. Bake at 325° until firm as desired.

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Alternates for meat? Consider dry beans, eggs, dry peas or lentils--or peanut butter.

IT'S BARBECUE TIME — "outdoor season" and picnic time _

If you're planning a picnic you should use a good, well-insulated cooler. The old one with the broken lid may not be a safe one for keeping cold foods cold. Use plenty of ice (but not dry ice) and do not open the cooler unnecessarily. Leave it in a shady spot to help keep the ice from melting too fast.

Making a salad? Preparing chicken for frying? Don't use the same cutting board unless you clean all work surfaces with soap and hot water. Never place cooked, ready-to-serve meat or poultry on the same surface or in a utensil used for the raw product (unless you have completely sanitized that surface).

Wash your hands often during preparation of foods and when cooking outdoors. Use disposable wash cloths, plates and utensils, if practical.

Salmonellae and Clostridium perfringens may not leave any tell-tale signs that they are around. Avoid them. Remember keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot--an invaluable point to know according to U.S. Department of Agriculture Home Economists.

FOOD PRESERVATION SERIES _____

Common problems in preparing fruits:

Cloudy jelly -- juice not properly strained, allowing to stand before pouring into glasses, using fruit that is too green.

Crystals in jelly -- too much sugar, cooking too little, or too slowly, or too long; crystals in grape jelly may be tartnate natural to grapes.

Mold on jam or jelly -- imperfect seal permits mold and air to get in.

Tough -- mixture is cooked too long, a result of too little sugar.

Too soft -- Too much juice in the mixture, too little sugar, not enough acid.

Or -- making too much in one cooking.

FOOD PRESERVATION SERIES -- On Pickles (Photos available to the Press)



JAMS, JELLIES and PRESERVES

Jams -- Jellies -- and Preserves have much in common because they are fruits preserved by means of sugar and boiling water bath processing. They provide a good way to use those fruits not best suited for canning or freezing -- the largest, smallest, and irregularly shaped.

First, be sure to follow a tested recipe, and remember, proper amounts of fruit, pectin, acid, and sugar are needed to make a satisfactory product of good jell consistency.

Equipment: Choose a kettle large enough to allow for a full boil of the liquid or fruit. Jars or glasses may be used as containers. They should be free from chipped edges, clean and sterilized if a paraffin seal is used.

Fruit mixtures that make fairly firm products may be sealed by covering with a single thin layer of melted paraffin, about 1/8th inch thick. Prick any air bubbles in paraffin layer to prevent holes as paraffin hardens. Remember, too, that paraffin may be re-used.

To seal with lids, use only standard jars and lids. Fill and seal according to manufacturer's directions. New U.S. Department of Agriculture instructions from the Agricultural Research Service recommend processing in boiling water bath.

Pectin, the substance in fruits when heated and combined with fruit acid and sugar causes the mixture to "jell". Fruits such as apples, plums, quinces contain pectin and combine well with other fruits that do not jell easily. Jellies and jams can also be made without commercial pectin but, you must follow tested recipes carefully. They require longer cooking periods than those with added pectin.

You may use corn sirup or honey instead of sugar in place of, or part of, but not all, of the sugar in recipes for jellied products.



NEW SLIDE SET AVAILABLE

"Fuel for Food" is the new U.S. Department of Agriculture slide set and filmstrip that urges Americans to continue to conserve gasoline and other forms of energy so farmers will be assured of a dependable supply to meet our food needs.

The slide presentation, available with soundtrack on cassette, explains the relationship between the amount of energy they use in their daily routine and the amount needed to grow their food supply. It stresses the critical need farmers have for a constant supply of energy from fuels needed to run tractors -- to warming baby chicks -- to fertilizers to make plants grow.

The slide set may be purchased for \$25. from the Photography Division, Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. The filmstrip for \$11.50 is available from the Photo Lab, Inc. 3825 Georgia Ave. N.W. Washington, D.C. 20011. An illustrated narrative guide is included.

BEEF - Inside and Out

If you're planning a barbecue you're probably, thinking: Steak, sizzling hot. Steak has meant real eating satisfaction for Americans for generations. Another mealtime winner has always been roast beef -- and hamburgers are as All-American as you can get. Ground beef runs all the way from chili con carne, lasagna, enchilados, tacos, tamales, and other ethnic dishes now widely popular. Marketing experts in the U.S. Department of Agriculture say that meat counters are generally well-stocked with beef now so whether it is for the barbecue outside -- or the beef-stew inside, you have appetizing fare with the beef dish and its versatility.

NOTE:

Additional information for the MEDIA and photographs (when applicable) may be obtained from: Shirley Wagener, Editor of Food and Home Notes, Room 535-A, Office of Communication/Press Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Or telephone 202-447-5898.
